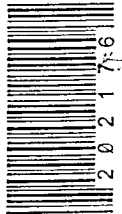


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# BANQUET

IN HONOR

OF

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE COMPLETION OF HIS FORTY-FIFTH YEAR  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

May 11, 1938

Auspices: The American Student Union

*When Mr. Lovett was approached by a representative of the American Student Union and informed of our plans for a banquet in his honor, he said, "I will not lend myself to a banquet that pays tribute to me. I will be glad to participate however, if you make it a tribute to the ideals which I tried to realize."*

*We agreed to such a condition. However when the articles for this pamphlet came in it was easy to see that to hope for a tribute to Mr. Lovett's work minimizing his personality was naive to say the least. No person who came into contact with Mr. Lovett could fail to be impressed by his personality. We apologize for the eulogies but . . . .*

*Those students and alumni of the University of Chicago who have engaged in extra-curricular activity of social significance know the many times that Mr. Lovett has inspired and helped them. Many men have left their mark on the university and its students but in the time the university has existed (and Mr. Lovett came here two years after its founding), no one has been so beloved by the students and valued as a vanguard fighter for progress and democracy.*

*He who praises Mr. Lovett pays tribute to the professor who has deserted the ivory tower to make his mark in the changing world.*

## Writer to Lovett

MEYER LEVIN

Author, *The Old Bunch*

A few years ago I had a sick novel on my hands. This happens to every writer, periodically, but the sickness is very hard to recognize, and the disease is like one of those "shameful" social diseases—one cannot bring oneself to admit its existence. Why, the last job was okay, so this one must be okay. Maybe it needs a little fixing, but—. And after all maybe I'm altogether wrong, maybe this is the best thing I've done. . . . But underneath all the rationalization, the sick feeling persists. Then the writer wants to consult a specialist. Hoping that the specialist will tell him he's all wrong, the symptoms are merely of some surface fever, the body is sound, a little tonic will tune it up, all will be wonderful.

The writer casts over in his mind all the doctors who ordinarily examine his work. His agent? But then if the agent doesn't like it, that means strained relationship. A fellow writer? But he's liable to be influenced by the secret jealousy that's deep in the heart of all writers, even when the best of friends. His personal friends? They won't want to hurt his feelings, and anyway what do they know about literature. His wife? Thumbs down from her would be too discouraging.

He casts back over all the literary connections he has made throughout his entire career. Publishers and ex-publishers and publisher's readers, critics, professional and non-professional, he invents elaborate schemes for submitting the work anonymously, to get a personality-free reaction, and finally he works his way back to the ultimate critic. The one person whose judgment he feels he can really trust. In my case it was a teacher—Lovett.

I hadn't seen Lovett for several years. I had been out of his class for ten years. But I thought: if Lovett says it's n.g. then I'll put it away at the bottom of the proverbial trunk.

So I got in touch with Lovett and asked him if he would read the book. Of course he agreed to the chore. But then this happened: I found it no longer necessary to have him read the thing. The very contact with him had been enough to transmit to me something of his unflinchingly honest outlook. I knew I didn't really want him to read it because I could sort of Lovett-read it for myself, and could then admit its basic flaws.

No other teacher, no other person, ever affected me that way in regard to my writing. If home is the place you go back to when you have no other place to stay, then Lovett is the home of every writer who ever sat in his composition class.

What is the secret of this wonderful "teaching"? It is not

teaching at all. Lovett never propounded a system of writing or of criticism. It is for this reason that it would be impossible to ring up any "Lovett school" of writers. He never boosted realism as against romanticism, Pater as against Dreiser. Lovett knows that writing cannot be taught. If any of us were to become artists, it would not be by following rules, or by imitation.

I once went to a school of painting in Paris, and all the instructor ever said was "continuez, continuez." That's the only way to teach any kind of art. But you have to know when to say "continue." Lovett knows.

What young writers, and even older ones, most crave is confirmation. They want to know that they have the stuff. They want someone to tell them that their stuff is good. When their stuff is bad, they have to be told most gently. Lovett's teaching consisted, as I remember, in singling out the best stuff for reading in class, in letting the worse stuff go with faint attention, perhaps a little dispraise. That allowed the writer to drop his faults, or keep them if he felt strongly for them. But at least he had a steady measuring stick in Lovett's reactions.

Whether Lovett is a good or bad teacher boils down essentially to the truth of his reactions. The evidence is in the great number of writers who have come out of his classes strengthened in their own individual ways of writing, and in the variety of their ways.

He never preached and he never lectured. Yet somehow I got from him a sense of being backed up, approved, as long as I was engaged in finding social truth. If he can be said to have encouraged my single tendency in literature, I believe that in his intangible and yet powerful way he did encourage this tendency. I could never show him anything that I didn't feel was basically good. He's the kind of teacher who continues to look over a writer's shoulder, all through the man's writing life. It's good that he's there.

### A Tribute to Robert Morss Lovett

NORMAN THOMAS

Prominent Socialist

I have been asked to write about Robert Morss Lovett as a socialist. I shall do a poor job because I find it very hard to say the things I feel the most. Robert Morss Lovett for me first of all is friend and comrade, the kind of man whose character and personality bring some conviction of an assured, constant and quiet strength in a troubled world. One always knows where to find him and his friendship. His has always been the kind of steadfastness of faith and purpose which disappointment with events or with

the failures of other men has never moved either to bitterness or despair, and with it all he has a sense of humor and a genius for fellowship which bring warmth and joy into life.

Robert Lovett was never the kind of man or socialist who feels compelled to apologize for his beliefs, to conceal them, or, on the other hand, to exaggerate them in order to prove his revolutionary quality. He has always had the courage to be himself no matter in what sort of group or at what kind of meeting or before what brand of inquisitors. Twenty years in the radical movement have taught me that this is a very great thing!

I find that I have said all this about my friend without yet referring to him specifically as a socialist. As a matter of fact, my own contacts with him have been closest in other organizations than the Socialist Party—in the American Civil Liberties Union, for instance, and above all, in the League for Industrial Democracy. The latter organization owes him a tremendous debt for his wise counsel as its president during difficult years. Now that I am asked to speak about Robert Lovett as a socialist I suddenly remember that I do not know whether he has ever held a red card in the party and, if so, for how long. I know that he is and long has been a socialist in basic convictions, and a supporter of the socialist cause in many campaigns. His socialism has been undogmatic but never superficial, arising from a deep belief in the possibility of achieving the good society. He has always understood that true democracy must be a democracy in industry and in economic life and not merely a mechanical affair of nose counting in political society. He has had the gift of imparting his knowledge and putting the wealth of his own culture at its disposal. For that we, his socialist friends, rise up to call him blessed, to wish for him many more years of life and strength, and for ourselves, in the hard days that lie ahead, continued enrichment from his fellowship and the service which he gives so freely without self-consciousness or patronage.

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### Robert Lovett's Contribution to American Literature

PROFESSOR PERCY BOYNTON

University of Chicago

Robert Lovett's widest reputation rests on his work as a social liberal. His professional description is Professor of English. His special fields are seventeenth and nineteenth century English Literature. Yet in the margins and crevices of his time he has done an impressive lot of work in the American field in an impressive number of ways: as a scholar, novelist and journalist.

I suppose, to be entitled to classification as a novelist, a writer

must have published at least two pieces of fiction. This Mr. Lovett did, "Richard Gresham" in 1904 and "A Winged Victory" in 1907. By the same course of reasoning I do not describe him as dramatist, for only one play, "Cowards," stands to his credit, though this was produced and published in 1914 and 1917.

In this earlier period he had done two pieces of work in collaboration with his friend William Vaughn Moody, "A History of English Literature" and "A First View of English Literature": books which stand in fine and somewhat lonely testimony that simple volumes for young students can be written that are accurate in fact, compact in design, discriminating in criticism and distinguished in literary style. All of this may be said also for the introductory essay with which Mr. Lovett prefaced his one volume edition of Moody's poems which appeared a quarter of a century later.

For a long while after the World War he added nothing to the list of his works as a scholar, but since 1925 there have appeared in steady succession a critical study of Edith Wharton, two books on fiction, the one technical, the other historical, and two extensive anthologies in the English and American fields, these latter works, like his earliest excursion, composed in collaboration with other scholars. Anyone who has ever enjoyed working relationships with Robert Lovett knows that it is a serious undertaking for a collaborator to keep up the pace with him. He is not one of the kind who lends his name and lets the other fellow do the work.

Mr. Lovett's interests as scholar, author and critic opened the path for him to literary journalism. I remember one day crossing the University campus with him and Herbert Croly, whose writings he is even now editing, when Croly was still dreaming toward *The New Republic*, of which he was soon after to be founder and editor. For a short time R. M. L. was associated with *The Dial* in one of its several protean changes; but for these many years he has been on the editorial board of *The New Republic*, supplying to its columns as literary editor, editorial writer and signed contributor a body of varied material, mostly on American life and letters, that would fill several stout volumes.

For my own part the chapter in Mr. Lovett's career as a figure in American journalism which I most enjoy can be told only in negatives. His bold and unflinching attitude on world peace and civil liberties and his unsparing criticism of the foes of these ideals long ago incurred for him the fierce enmity of one of the most powerful and unscrupulous of American newspaper magnates. This man decided to put the quietus on Mr. Lovett, the process being, journalistically, first to "build him up," and then to destroy

him. The build-up was very effective, but in spite of every effort the destruction does not seem to have come off as planned. At the moment R. M. L. is flourishing like the green bay tree and the Great Destroyer is discredited and slipping.

It is almost too complete a moral tale, a modern Rollo Book about "The Good, Modest Editor and the Big, Bad Editor," but anyway there it is, and I like to meditate on its facts and its implications.

### Mr. Lovett as a Hull-House Resident

#### A HULL-HOUSE RESIDENT

When Mr. and Mrs. Lovett were choosing between their familiar Cambridge and the new Middle West, and he questioned, "Why should I go out there?", Mrs. Lovett answered, "Jane Addams is in Chicago." They became, as many others of that early University group, friends and supporters of Hull-House.

After the war, it was natural because of their deep interest in world peace that Mr. and Mrs. Lovett should work with Miss Addams and live at Hull-House.

Theirs was a brilliant, distinguished residence. They gave intellectual and spiritual strength to the House. They invited notable friends and colleagues. They broadened the settlement's associations and interests.

Mr. Lovett's return each January from his six months with the *New Republic* brought a fresh approach to world affairs. In the Hull-House dining room he shared his knowledge, his philosophy, his humor. (And he sang from end to end the Ballad of the Codfish Cake.)

Keenly aware of pressing social problems, he went further than most in recognizing the immediate next step. A civil liberty encroached upon, a democratic institution imperiled—he could indicate a concrete method for resident expression; he knew to whom and how an effective protest should be made.

This promptness to act was reflected again in his participation in daily settlement concerns. He was available to all. His intelligent human interest and response never failed. The man in broken English telling about a son just picked up by the police; the woman threatened with eviction; the shabby author seeking a publisher: to all he listened, to each he gave counsel.

There was time to sit in court day after day on a neighborhood case, because he believed that the presence of a citizen interested only in justice made that justice more secure. He was there at the end of the trial; for he was conscientious; he finished what he undertook.



There was time, at the request of the police commissioner for impartial reports, to observe the strikers' picket lines. And even time to be arrested, which gave the residents who bailed him out their proudest moment, and the station captain his most bewildered.

Stories abound of Mr. Lovett on door. The keen intellect might be baffled by the job's peculiar exigencies, but he always found some solution, albeit uniquely his own.

Individually and in groups neighbors and residents knew the warm hospitality of the Lovett living room. It was there that the class for anyone interested in writing started in 1928. For ten years beginner and professional met together and were helped. The first attempt, the sophisticated poem, alike received consideration. The charm of the foreigner's expression was preserved.

In the months immediately following Miss Addams's death, Mr. Lovett gave to the House more generously than ever of his time and thought. They had been close friends. They shared the same ideals. They worked for the same causes. He knew the great responsibilities that lay ahead.

One of the responsibilities in this time of world disorder, Hull-House realizes, is working for world peace, and in the movement looks for leadership to its former resident, Robert Morss Lovett.

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### **Robert Morss Lovett**

PROFESSOR JAMES WEBER LINN

University of Chicago

Robert Morss Lovett is a figure of national interest. He has either headed or been an influential member of many organizations concerned with the establishment of civil liberties, at home and abroad. On the general topic of peace with understanding and without violence, he has been and still is one of the most widely-known speakers in the United States. He is a thorough-going, and far from soft-spoken, advocate of what he regards as the rights of labor. He has been threatened by mobs, and arrested on the false and conspiratorial charge of disturbing the very peace of which he is a foremost advocate. The commission of the Illinois State Senate which in 1935 "investigated" the University of Chicago gave the institution a clean bill of health with the single exception of what it apparently regarded as a Lovettian infection. In the now almost forgotten volume called "The Red Network," Mr. Lovett's efforts in behalf of civil liberties were given, I am told, more derogatory attention than those of any one else, except Miss Jane Addams. In short, he has attracted as much unfavorable notice from those whose disfavor is almost an honor, as any

crusader for social justice of his generation, save Miss Addams herself; of whom he once said that she was "the only person he would follow blindfold into social conflict." He is so highly endowed with both physical and moral courage that I believe the most adverse public opinion has affected him even less than it affected Miss Addams. But there have been in his life many moments when he must have smiled with grim regret over the reflection that his major reputation has been entirely tangential to his disposition, and incidental to his major abilities.

For his disposition is altogether toward sympathetic understanding, and gentle, almost humorous, detachment from controversy. He was, is, and will ever be primarily a teacher, a scholar, and a kindly critic of letters and life. Such he was, *in posse*, when he graduated from Harvard in 1892, and when President Eliot of Harvard wrote President Harper of Chicago that "Lovett is a man by whose character and later achievements Harvard is willing to be judged as an educational institution." Such he was when I first knew him in 1894, as a teacher of English Composition and as head of a college men's residence hall (Snell Hall at the University of Chicago). Such thousands of students and hundreds of published articles and many novels, plays, and textbooks have proclaimed him to be throughout the last forty-five years. Such he is now. Last summer I had the privilege of spending a week in the company of five Harvard men of Lovett's day—two famous lawyers, a college professor, a violently conservative editorial writer for one of the most reactionary newspapers in the United States, and a distinguished judge of the Appellate Court of the State of New York. Higher praise of any man's critical intelligence, warmer expressions of friendship and affectionate appreciation of social charm, I never heard than from those rich and rigid gentlemen about Robert Lovett. One lawyer told of having established in his home what he calls "Lovett's room," for the professor's habitation whenever he is in Washington. The editor, whose paper once in its "news columns" called Lovett a "well-known communist," was trying to get the professor to take a trip around the world with him. They were equally united in their mock despair over his "bad judgment" and their sincere delight in his attainments and his company. Why, oh why, they lamented, had the wittiest talker, the most sensitive critic, the most vigorous literary thinker, of his time, sunk to become a keeper of the Cave of Adullam, to which, you will remember, there came for refuge "all those that were oppressed." I agreed with them; except that I did not think he had sunk, I thought that he had risen, risen on the wings of understanding to reach those

peaks of sympathy amidst which the Cave of Adullam lies.

As a scholar and critic, he has produced (with William Vaughn Moody) the best brief text-book history of English literature in the language and (with one of his former pupils, Professor Helen Hughes) the best account of the history of the novel in English I know. As a teacher, he has sent from his classes more competent writers of American fiction than any other teacher in the United States. How has he taught them? I don't know. Perhaps he has not taught, only warmed them; let them alone, and they've come home, bringing their tales behind them. As a writer of short articles on literary and social subjects, accurate, enlightening, almost always delicately witty, he is, I think, unsurpassed. He has ploughed no new fields, but he has reaped in many, new and old, and left them more fertile than he found them, for where he walks the flowers of his ironical fancy spring. Born on Christmas Day, he has been a Santa Claus of humorous delights to innumerable grateful friends. It is, I think, by definite purpose that in the concise list of his achievements he has given in "Who's Who in America" he has permitted not a word of his long struggle for civil liberty to appear. In "Who's Who" he has written himself down as a teacher and author only. "Teaching and writing have been my professions," he says in effect; "my citizenship is my own affair, not for advertisement." Yet it is as a great citizen that even his pupils must take in him their great pride. For it is in the hard ways that his spirit has walked most in beauty. A fascinating companion, a loyal friend, a wise instructor, a keen critic and commentator, he has been and remains; but it is when he dons the armor of indignation and goes forth to battle for those less privileged by chance and inheritance than he, that he seems, if least contented, most adorned.

### **Robert Morss Lovett, the True Liberal**

JAN WITTENBER

Illinois Secretary of the International Labor Defense

Bonivard, Swiss patriot imprisoned for his activities and famed as the "Prisoner of Chillon Castle," wore a track two inches deep in the stone floor of his prison by his constant pacing back and forth. Robert Morss Lovett is likened to this to the extent that throughout his life he was always ready to respond and set forth on a mission for freedom and when democracy was in danger.

An old Italian philosopher once stated, "He gets twice who gives quickly." Again Professor Lovett aptly fits into the thought behind this phrase. There were few causes to which he did not respond. The experience of our organization has been that to come under

the definition of a true liberal, one cannot split hairs and find countless objections to the color of a skin or the political tinge of a person's mind. Professor Lovett has always possessed an abundance of this virtue. Whether we had a series of civic and labor rights violations in the form of deportation, police terror, or defense of a communist, Professor Lovett never hesitated to act as a true liberal.

He has rendered invaluable service in forming committees with us of the original League Against War, the National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners, National Committee for Protection of Foreign Born and countless other important united front campaigns.

In the year of 1932, when the Tom Mooney Congress took place in Chicago, Professor Lovett almost single handed gave answer and leadership to the campaign of terror when the blame for a series of dynamite charges was laid at the door of the Congress. It was Professor Lovett who answered the red baiting of city officials led by the late Anton Cermak of South Side Massacre fame. It was he who offered a \$1,000 reward out of his own pocket for the arrest and apprehension of the guilty. His clear judgment was proven shortly after when it was revealed that the dynamiting was initiated by sections of the Capone gangsters. When arrests occurred arising out of this incident and delegates were held incommunicado, Professor Lovett militantly rose to his feet at the Congress and dared to lead a delegation of the entire Congress to the Eleventh Street Station to force their release. They were shortly freed.

The International Labor Defense states unhesitatingly that the steady ideals, convictions, and courage shown by Robert Morss Lovett place him in an enviable position in the pages of progressive history in America. We take pride in the fact that we have named some of the strongest branches of our organization in his honor. Were there more men and women like him the world would be a better place to live in.

### **Robert Morss Lovett, Man of Letters**

THOMAS HOWELLS

Student, University of Chicago

During the forty-five years that Robert Morss Lovett has taught classes in literature at the University of Chicago, he has had as students a considerable number of the best known writers and journalists of the present day. Some of them are in the first rank of contemporary American letters. Many have had honorable and useful careers as teachers, journalists, editors, and critics. Their

names represent almost every variety of composition and personalities as diversified as literature itself.

To show the notable lack of homogeneity in the products of his teaching, Mr. Lovett points to Carl Van Vechten on the one hand and Vardis Fisher on the other, whom he cites triumphantly as evidence that the teacher does not make writers what they are, since, as he says, one cause could hardly have produced such radically different results. But this is not to say that teachers like Mr. Lovett do not materially further potential authors along paths of their own choice. The influence of a cogent and comprehensive mind has an equally legitimate place in a book like Dorothy Scarborough's whimsical *Can't Get a Red Bird* and James Farrell's by no means whimsical novel of Chicago, *Studs Lonigan*. In both cases, the influence of good teachers would be one not of direction but of stimulus.

It was this great diversity among his former students of literary fame that once caused Mr. Lovett to oppose a suggestion for a reunion of them at a dinner in New York. The idea was an admirable one, he said; but unfortunately for the peace of mind and good cheer imperative at such gatherings, there was no conceivable way of preventing guests so unlike in their sympathies from flying at one another's throats.

Carl Van Vechten was probably the first student of Mr. Lovett to achieve wide repute as a novelist. He was in Mr. Lovett's classes in 1903, following Mr. Lovett's return from a year-long stay in Europe. Van Vechten is well known as a music critic, novelist, and essayist.

James Weber Linn and Carl Grabo of the University of Chicago, known both as teachers and writers, were in Mr. Lovett's early classes in composition. Mrs. Flint, also of the University, was the first freshman student to impress Mr. Lovett with a sense of literary style when he arrived in Chicago in 1893.

Maud Radford, later Maud Radford Warren, wife of Professor Warren, formerly of the History Department at Chicago, was in Mr. Lovett's early classes in the '90's. She became well known as a short story writer for the *Saturday Evening Post* and as a correspondent during the period of American participation in the World War. Mrs. Warren is said to have got nearer the front lines than any other American woman correspondent. One day in the trenches she heard the name Lovett mentioned by some American soldiers, and inquiring, learned of the death of Mr. Lovett's son, a lieutenant in a company of the 103rd Regiment, who had fallen with most of his men in an attack the day before.

Probably the most prolific writer among Mr. Lovett's former

students, distinguished both as a novelist and a teacher, is Helen Hull, now at Columbia University. Among her novels are *Islanders*, *The Asking Price*, and *The Surrey Family*. Miss Hull was at Chicago in the early 1900's.

Among his students of the pre-war years, Mr. Lovett recalls Gertrude Emerson, sister of Professor Alfred Emerson, and Elsie Weil. Miss Emerson, a noted Orientalist, was subsequently editor of the magazine *Asia* and wrote *Voiceless India*, which Mr. Lovett regards as the best book on India ever written. Miss Weil was also connected with the same magazine, of which she is at present associate editor. With several other young women in Mr. Lovett's composition classes, they wrote extensively for *Asia* and also did writing for the *Chicago Evening Post*. In the offices of the *Post*, Mr. Lovett recalls, the group of them were known as the "Ann Veronicas," after H. G. Wells' celebrated novel of advance-guard feminism.

Burton Rascoe, the well-known editor and critic, attended the University from 1911 to 1913 and was in some of Mr. Lovett's classes. Ernestine Evans, the magazine writer, was another student of about the same period.

Howard Mumford Jones, who received the Master of Arts degree at Chicago in 1915, was a student of Mr. Lovett. Last year Mr. Jones, now professor of English literature at Harvard, dedicated to Mr. Lovett his life of Thomas Moore, *The Harp That Once—*. Professor Jones, one of the most distinguished of present scholars, has written poems, plays, and essays.

Dorothy Scarborough was a student of Mr. Lovett at approximately this period. Among her writings in addition to *Can't Get a Red Bird* are *The Supernatural in Modern English Fiction*, and a folk lore study, *On the Trail of Negro Folk Songs*.

Samuel Rogers, now an associate professor of French at the University of Wisconsin, did his Master's thesis for Mr. Lovett in 1917, writing on Henry James. Mr. Rogers, a writer of distinction, was awarded the Atlantic Novel Prize in 1934 for his *Dusk at the Grove*. Others of his books are *The Sombre Flame*, *Less Than Kind*, and *The Birthday*.

In this period, Helen Sard Hughes, professor of English at Wellesley College, was a student of Mr. Lovett. She was the first, he recalls, to take a Doctor's degree with him. In addition to other writing, Miss Hughes collaborated with Mr. Lovett in writing *The History of the Novel in England*.

As he has set forth in his book of reminiscences, *Personal History*, Vincent Sheean, the journalist and novelist, was at the University in 1916-19, and while here attended some of Mr. Lovett's classes.

An even more famous newspaper man that Mr. Lovett recalls is John Gunther, who took his Bachelor's degree at the University in 1922. Gunther, the author of *Inside Europe*, has written such other books as *The Red Pavilion*, *The Bright Nemesis*, and *Peter Lancelot*.

Beginning with 1917, Mr. Lovett was connected with the University of Chicago Poetry Club, which had its start in a suggestion from him. It was founded, as Mr. Lovett tells in his preface to the volume which the Club published in 1923, by Harold Van Kirk; and the first meeting of the Club took place at Mr. Lovett's house.

Among the early members of the Poetry Club, most of them represented in the 1923 volume *Collected Verse*, were Gladys Campbell, Carrol Lane Fenton, Maurice De Koven, Donald Peattie, Helen Goodspeed, Robert Redfield, Bertha Ten Ecyk James, Arthur Kramer, Maurice Lesemann, Janet Lewis, Marian Manly, Yvor Winters, Jessica Nelson North, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Lucy Hale Sturges, and Glenway Westcott.

The list includes some very well known literary personages, as well as several who have achieved prominence in other employments, notably Mr. Redfield, now Professor of Anthropology and Dean of the Social Sciences at the University.

Glenway Westcott and Elizabeth Madox Roberts were both in Mr. Lovett's composition classes and both are among the outstanding American novelists. Westcott is famous as the author of *The Grandmothers* and *Good Bye, Wisconsin*. Miss Roberts, who took the Bachelor's degree in 1921, has written *The Time of Man*, *My Heart and My Flesh*, and *The Great Meadow* among others.

Mr. Lovett regards *The Time of Man* as one of the very finest of American novels. It was a keen disappointment to him, he says, that his colleagues on the Pulitzer Prize Committee would not join him in conferring this prize upon Miss Roberts in 1926, the year *Time of Man* appeared.

Other students of approximately the same period are Viola Paradise and Vardis Fisher. Miss Paradise is best known, perhaps, as the author of the famous short story, *The Match*.

Vardis Fisher, one of the leading contemporary novelists, and a student of Mr. Lovett, received both his M.A. and his Ph.D. at the University, the latter degree in 1925. He has written, in part, *Toilers of the Hills*, *In Tragic Life*, *Passions Spin the Plot*, and *The Neurotic Nightingale*.

Mr. Lovett remembers George Dillon both in connection with the Poetry Club and as a student of his in competition. Dillon's first book, *Boy in the Wind*, was made up of the same series of poems which he submitted to Mr. Lovett for credit in a composi-

tion course. Mr. Lovett, considering that a student who could write good poetry might be held *a priori* to have a sufficient knowledge of composition, gave Dillon full credit for the course.

Dillon, one of the best known of contemporary poets, is now editor of Poetry Magazine.

Morton D. Zabel, formerly editor of Poetry, now a professor at Loyola and a distinguished literary critic, was a student of Mr. Lovett, for whom he did his Doctor's dissertation.

Of Mr. Lovett's students of recent years, James T. Farrell, the novelist, is perhaps the most famed. Farrell took courses in composition with Mr. Lovett; and it was largely owing to Mr. Lovett's efforts that Farrell's first novel found a receptive publisher. The book was *Studs Lonigan*, the first of Farrell's trilogy by that name. Upon Mr. Lovett's suggestion, a well known sociologist was induced to write a preface guaranteeing the utter veracity of the novel's background—the publisher being a little doubtful; and Mr. Lovett wrote another preface guaranteeing that the book was also a good piece of fiction.

Meyer Levin, the novelist and editor, is another former student of Mr. Lovett who has attained prominence as a writer.

Mr. Lovett continued to teach advanced composition at the University until the arrival of Thornton Wilder, to whom he gladly turned over the considerable burden of directing the literary destinies of Chicago students. But Mr. Lovett has remained the critic and negotiator for any number of prospective writers, both on the campus and off. The Poetry Club, revived on campus this year, very naturally asked Mr. Lovett to act as one of the judges in the selection of manuscript for the Club's forthcoming anthology; and Mr. Lovett accepted the task with his habitual air of receiving a favor when he is conferring one.

As an instance of the trouble into which one may fall through a disinterested endeavor to serve the cause of literature, Mr. Lovett tells of the famous letter which the investigating committee of the Illinois legislature displayed as its ace-in-the-hole at the time of the so-called "Red trial." While he was in the course of reading various literary efforts submitted to him at Hull House, a certain writer there brought forth a book manuscript about his intensely personal and harrowing experiences in Russia during the Revolution. Mr. Lovett, though not agreeing with the conclusions of the writer, felt that the book deserved a hearing, and arranged for its publication with an Eastern firm. When the sales of the book, upon publication, proved to be somewhat less than the author's expectations, he wrote an abusive letter to Mr. Lovett accusing him, as Mr. Lovett says, of sabotaging the sale because



his own sympathies were with the contrary view. To this Mr. Lovett replied at once, warmly asserting his independence of governmental entanglements and declaring that viewed objectively "all governments are rotten." The disappointed author waited until the time was ripe, or a market open, and sold Mr. Lovett's letter to a man who is at present notorious as a Nazi agent in Chicago. Through these, to say the least, rather devious channels, the letter reached the hands of the Committee for the Investigation of the University of Chicago. And it was this letter, containing the heretical view of government, that the Committee produced for what they intended to be Exhibit A in a criminal indictment of the University, but which by the sorry light of facts came to seem only Open Secret Number 1 in Mr. Hearst's three-penny sideshow.

Mr. Lovett, however, is incorrigible, and still functions as, in his own words, "liaison officer for American letters." The number of book manuscripts which he has recommended to publishers—the work of authors both within and without the University—is a long and impressive one. In the class room, he remains a prime force for the direct stimulation of writing. Anyone who has been in any of his classes will witness to the high efficacy of the man as a teacher, and will feel no surprise that authors of distinction have acknowledged their obligation to him.

As in innumerable lectures of the class room, so in his writing, for instance in the two best general texts of English literary history yet written, *The History of English Literature*, and *The History of the Novel in England*, co-written with Helen Hughes, the reader may see what it is that Mr. Lovett has offered student and writer for many years. It is the quality of the man himself tangibly evidenced in the application of vital ideas to literature for the test of its vitality. And this quality is that of a man who in power and performance stands among the greatest teachers of all time, second to none. In books, articles, public addresses, and in class room lectures, Mr. Lovett has given in full measure all that a great teacher can give: the honest perspective, the trenchant and sympathetic sanity, the knowledge that has no gaps, and the understanding that never blurs. Literature thrives with such men, and only with such men.